

בעזהשׁי״ת

Parshah Insights

Pertinent Inspirational
Insights on the Parshah

פרשת בשלח

Translated from the outstanding Lev Shomaya Parsha series that contain highlights of the lectures and deroshos given by:

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The purpose of this publication is to make these wonderful Divrei Torah and chizuk available to the English speaking public. We are very grateful to Harav Low shlita for allowing us to glean selected inspiring thoughts.

larger stone, and לְבִנָּה a smaller one. אָרִיחַ here refers to the words, and לְבִנָּה to the spaces between them. The Shira is written in a way that there are small groups of words, then large spaces, and the following line is set up so that under the spaces of the previous line, there is text, and under the text there are spaces. This is radically different from the way in which the rest of the Torah is written.

The Chiddushei Harim explained, that just like this kriah was written differently to the rest of the Torah, so too, the great השפעה that the weekly Torah portion can have, is also significantly different on Shabbos Shira to the rest of the year. Every week the Torah portion brings great השפעות, but on Shabbos Shira this effect is greatly multiplied. Therefore, this exalted Shabbos is given the unique quality of being referred to according to the kriah, as שֶׁבֶת שִׁירָה, differently from every other Shabbos of the year (רמתיים צופים תנוד"א פט"ז).

The Chiddushei Harim explained this to his congregation on Shabbos Shira, after the Friday night davening. Talmidim related that he was בְּלֶהֱבֵת אֵשׁ, his countenance was aflame with passion when he counseled the people that on Shabbos Shira one should feel an ethereal genuine joy. Thus, it is important to delve into the Shira, and understand its importance and why it has such a great effect on the world.

Coronating the King of all Kings

The Maggid of Trisk says that the words אָרִיחַ עַל גְּבֵי לְבִנָּה allude to a crown. He explains that the ק"ד of these words totals רָאשֵׁי תִיבוֹת. When these letters are written fully, קו"ף דל"ת, it equals תר"כ, the same amount as כְּתֹרֶת, a crown. Through Shira, Hashem's Crown is revealed in this world.

When Klal Yisroel say שִׁירַת הַיָּם, it is as though we are coronating Hashem with the Royal Crown. It is known that at the time of a king's coronation, he gifts his loyal citizenry with special privileges and perks such as a reduction in taxes and upgraded services. How much more

so when the King of all kings is 'coronated' with שִׁירַת הַיָּם. He bestows upon His nation untold blessings and הַשְּׁפָעוֹת טוֹבוֹת. It is a time when Hashem is מְמַלֵּא מִשְׁאָלוֹת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל He fulfills the needs of Klal Yisroel, with Brochos for every Yid as an individual and for the nation as a whole (מגן אברהם ד"ה פתח).

This concept can be seen in the Midrash, which quotes a verse from Tehillim, in reference to saying Shira. נִכּוֹן כְּסָאָךָ מֵאָז מְעוֹלָם אָתָּה. (תהלים צג, ב) Your Throne is established from then, eternal are You. Even though Hashem's throne exists from the beginning of time, it was not completely known in the world and not 'fully established' until His children said Shira. נִכּוֹן כְּסָאָךָ Hashem's throne became fully known, מֵאָז when Klal Yisroel sang מִשִּׁיר מֹשֶׁה after Krias Yam Suf.

The Midrash gives a mashal of a king that went out to fight his enemies, and then returned to his land victorious. The nation subsequently celebrated another coronation, declaring that until then he was indeed their king, but after his victory, he became elevated to emperor. They upgraded his status by calling him a title of even greater stature. So too, when a Yid says Shira it is as though he is 'coronating' Hashem in His world, thereby 'reestablishing and reinforcing' Hashem's Throne. Despite the fact that מְעוֹלָם אָתָּה, it is already established from time immemorial, it is revealed again through Klal Yisroel saying Shira (מדרש רבה כ"ג א).

When the Sun didn't Sing Shira

The יערת דבש cites the Arizal, explaining that the entire world operates on the power of Shira. To reinforce this concept, he cites the episode when Yehoshua went to battle for the Givonim.

The Givonim were from the same region as another five nations that fought with Klal Yisroel. Consequently, the Givonim broke away from the other five nations and made a peace agreement with the Yidden. When the remaining nations heard about this new pact that the Givonim made with Klal Yisroel, they exacted their revenge on

them by coming out to battle them. The Givonim asked Klal Yisroel for assistance fighting their new enemies in this battle that they incurred due to their fealty for Yisroel. Hashem approved Klal Yisroel's involvement in this war. Klal Yisroel went to battle with the five nations that were fighting the Givonim, and many miracles occurred. However, when the sun was setting in the evening, the battle was not yet won and the five kings were not yet captured. Yehoshua wanted to finish the battle before nightfall, because once the sun set their success could have been in jeopardy.

Yehoshua called out (יהושע י י"ב) "שָׁמַשׁ בְּגִבְעוֹן דּוֹם" "sun stand still upon Givon", so that the Yidden can finish fighting the war. The sun indeed stood still for thirty-six hours. At that time Yehoshua sang Shira. Yehoshua's Shira, was instead of that sung by the sun when it sets in the evening. The setting of the sun and indeed all its movement, is powered by the Shira it sings to Hashem. The Shira gives it the ability to move.

Because Yehoshua wanted the sun to stand still, he commanded it to stop singing Shira. Once it stopped singing it no longer had the ability to continue moving toward the horizon. Because Shira is such an essential force that keeps the world running, Yehoshua had to make up for the missing Shira. Therefore, Yehoshua sang Shira instead of the sun, so that there would not be a detrimental void from the missing Shira of the sun.

The Song of Every Creation

Indeed, the entire creation's continuance is contingent on the Shira that every existing creation sings. The Shira of every בְּרִיאָה gives it both the ability to continue existing as well as the ability to be mashpia, to have an effect, on the rest of creation.

That is the meaning of all the Shira that every animal sings as is detailed in Perek Shira. Because all the various creations sing Shira daily, therefore, they have the ability to influence creation and fulfill

the purpose for which they were created. This is in line with what the Trisker Maggid said about the amazing הַשְּׁפָעוֹת that are bestowed upon the world at the time when Shira is said. Because Shira releases amazing השפעות, these hashpaos enable the one who sang to fulfill that which he was created for. Shira is a life-giving force (יערות דבש ח"א דרוש ד).

The Divrei Yisroel of Modzitz (דברי ישראל - חנוכה) quotes the sefer Avodas akodesh, which explains why an infant child is often soothed through song. When a child hears singing, it's neshama is reminded of the שירת הגלגלים the song that it heard in hamayim. This powerful memory, of hearing Hashem's shira being sung, restores tranquility to the soul. This again demonstrates how both this world, and the upper worlds revolve around the power of Shira. Shira is a central part of our Avodas Hashem, and it in turn enables all the worlds to continue operating. This is also mentioned in the sefer מעבר יבק.

Upholding the World

Chazal say that there are ten salient שירות in the world (see Targum beginning Shir of HaShirim). The first Shira was sung by Adam Harishon after Hashem forgave him for the sin of eating from the עץ הַדַּעַת. He sang מְזֻמֹּר שִׁיר לְיוֹם הַשְּׁבֹת. The fifth Shira was that sung by Yehoshua at the time when the sun stood still in Givon, as mentioned earlier.

According to Midrash Tanchuma, the first Shira was sung by Klal Yisroel on the night of their redemption from Mitzrayim. The tenth Shira will Bezras Hashem be sung when Moshiach will come at the final redemption. This Shira will be the same as that which was sung at Yetzias Mitzrayim. The שִׁיר יְהוָה לָכֶם כָּלֵיל הַתְּמַדָּשׁ חָג (ישעיה ל כט) The Shira יְהוָה לָכֶם כָּלֵיל הַתְּמַדָּשׁ חָג will be sung the same way as was sung on the night when the Yom Tov of Pesach was first consecrated in Mitzrayim.

The Targum says עֲשָׂרָה שִׁירוֹת בְּעֶלְמָא, there are ten Shiros in the world. The word עֶלְמָא suggests that these Shiros uphold the world.

These שירות are the life-giving force that ensure the continued existence of the world.

Shira with Simcha

This amazing power of singing Shira can be harnessed on a daily basis when saying אָז יְשִׁיר during Shachris. We can merit great blessings if we recite this Shira properly. The Sefer Chezkuni sees a reference from the wording of אָז יְשִׁיר, which shows that we are obligated to say this Shira daily. אָז יְשִׁיר מִשֶּׁה וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת. לֵה' וַיֹּאמְרוּ לְאֱמוּנָה, then Moshe and Klal Yisroel sang this Shira to Hashem, and they spoke, saying, and the Shira continues. The Chezkuni sees a reference in the word, לְאֱמוּנָה, which means 'to say', to the obligation for future generations to continue saying this Shira.

The Ohr Hachaim learns this idea from the words אָז יְשִׁיר, they will sing, as opposed to אָז שָׁר, then they sang. This is a reference to the fact that there will be the possibility to continue singing this shira in all future generations.

The Mishnah Berurah quotes the Zohar Hakodosh, and he instructs that one should say this Shira with simcha. He should visualize himself as though he just witnessed this great miracle. He should try to feel as though he actually just miraculously walked through the dryness in the middle of the roiling sea. And in that way, he will sing this Shira with true joy and gratitude. The Mishnah Berurah adds that one who says the Shira with genuine joy can merit forgiveness for his aveiros.

This is also mentioned in many Sifrei Mussar, including the סִפְרֵי הַחֲדָשִׁים, the עֲבוֹדַת הַקּוֹדֶשׁ of the Chida and the שְׁל"ה. It is interesting to note however, that the Mishnah Berurah, which is a sefer focused on basic halacha, instructs one to recite the Shira in this manner, meaning it is the proper way, and not just a preferred way. Indeed, this suggests that this is the purpose why אָז יְשִׁיר was included in our daily tefillos. So that we should say it with great kavanah, thanking Hashem

for the personal miracle that we ourselves experienced, and thus filling us each day with renewed wellsprings of joy.

We Were There

At the end of the Haggadah, before we say Hallel, we say לְפִיכָּךְ לָךְ, אֲנַחְנוּ חַיִּיבִים לְהוֹדוֹת לָךְ, therefore we are obligated to Thank You. This probably refers to all the Nissim that have been mentioned throughout the Haggadah, up until that point, where we are so overwhelmed with gratitude, that we start singing Hallel. The אַבְנֵי־דָרֶהֱם says that in fact, this verse is a direct continuation of what we said right before, בְּכָל דּוֹר וָדוֹר חַיֵּב אָדָם לִרְאוֹת אֶת עַצְמוֹ כְּאִילוֹ הוּא יֵצֵא מִמִּצְרַיִם in every generation one is required to see himself as though he himself left Mitzrayim. We have to immerse ourselves fully until we feel that we alone felt the pain of the שִׁעְבוּד מִצְרַיִם and the great miracle of Yetzias Mitzrayim. לְפִיכָּךְ because we are actually feeling as though we ourselves were just redeemed, therefore, we say Shira.

The difference between Shira, as opposed to regular הוֹדָאָה is that one says Shira for a miracle that he just experienced. הוֹדָאָה, on the other hand, is an expression of general gratefulness for the many chassadim we are granted, not necessarily for a miracle we experienced immediately before we thanked. Thus, the Hallel that we say Pesach night is considered Shira, because we are saying it with hearts full of joy and passion, because it is as though we just experienced these great miracles of Yetzias Mitzraim. So too, in order for אָז יֵשִׁיר to have this great כֹּחַ of Shira, we too need to feel each time again as though we personally experienced this tremendous miracle at just that moment.

Meriting Forgiveness

The Midrash (תהלים יח ו) says כָּל מִי שֶׁנִּעְשָׂה לוֹ גַם וְאוֹמֵר שִׁירָה בִּידוּעָה שְׂמוֹתָיו לֹא יִשְׁמָחוּ לָיו לֹא עוֹנוֹתָיו וְנִעְשָׂה כְּבָרִיהַ חֲדָשָׁה and subsequently sings Shira, it is known that his sins are forgiven, and he is created from new, as though he were reborn. The Midrash

learns this from the possuk after שִׁירַת הַיָּם, that states וַיִּסַּע מֹשֶׁה אֶת יְשׂרָאֵל מִיָּם סוּף וַיִּגְדֹּל מִיָּם סוּף וַיִּגְדֹּל יִשְׂרָאֵל מִיָּם סוּף and Moshe led Bnei Yisroel further away from the Yam Suf. This means he led them away from their sin that they sinned at the Yam Suf. What was their sin? They previously complained, when they saw the Mitzrim behind them, and the great sea in front of them, 'were there not enough graves in Mitzrayim, that Hashem had to lead us all into the desert, simply for us to perish there?' This sin was forgiven through their subsequent act of singing a genuine joy-filled Shira. They were granted mechila due to their Shira.

The Sifrei Mussar say that we too can be granted mechila if we say Shira with true simcha. The שְׁעָרֵי הַקּוֹדֶשׁ (a commentary on the sefer Avodas Hakodesh of the Chida) says that it is known that דִּין לְבָא מִן דִּין לְהִיּוֹת פְּגוּדוֹן one can only learn a din from a different place if the situation is identical in both cases. If we learn from here that singing Shira can bring forgiveness, then undoubtedly the Shira must be sung in a similar way to how Klal Yisroel sang; with awe after having witnessed the unbelievable miracle of Krias Yam Suf. In order for the Shira to have the same effects, the same power to induce forgiveness, it must be sung with a measure of the same ecstasy as the original Shira. If we imagine that we are at the Yam Suf, and visualize ourselves walking through the Yam Suf, then we will have the ability to sing genuine Shira.

The words of the Midrash וַיִּנְעֲשֶׂה כְּבָרֶיהָ חֲדָשָׁה correspond well with the explanation of the יַעֲרוֹת דְּבֶשׁ mentioned earlier; that the life-giving force of creation is Shira, as seen with the incident of Yehoshua in Givon. Because Shira infuses every creation, and indeed every person with new kochos, therefore, when he sings he becomes כְּבָרֶיהָ חֲדָשָׁה like a new creation.

The Crown of Moshiach

The Zohar Hakodosh says (as mentioned earlier that the Chezkuni and the Ohr Hachaim later explained this concept) that the word לְאֹמֵר, in the Shira of יִשְׂרָאֵל, is a reference to the fact that this Shira should

be said in all future generations. This is so that it should never be forgotten. Whoever says שִׁירַת הַיָּם in this world, will merit to sing it in the world to come, and will also be zoche to say it when Moshiach will come. This will be at the ultimate simcha of פְּנִיטַת יִשְׂרָאֵל and הַקִּב"ה. (זוהר פ' בשלח דף נד:)

The Zohar Hakodosh also says that when Klal Yisroel sings Shira, Hashem places upon the heads of Klal Yisroel the crown that Moshiach will don when he comes to herald the geulah. And when Moshiach will come, those that sang Shira will be able to greet him, when he will wear this very same crown upon his head. Therefore, one should put his whole soul, his innermost feelings, into reciting this Shira. Whoever will sing Shira in this way, will be zoche to greet Moshiach in his fullest glory, while Moshiach will be wearing this crown on his head. And then he will merit to sing this Shira again. (זוהר פ' תרומה דף קלב.)

Thus, the Shinever Rov, when being blessed that he should live to see Moshiach's arrival, (אִיר זָאֵלֵט דְּעֵרְלֶעבֶן מְשִׁיחַ) would respond "I do not want to see Moshiach, I want to be able to greet him and see him in his full glory." As we explained, there will be different levels of how one will experience the coming of Moshiach and how one will be able to see and greet Moshiach when he will finally come. Seeing Moshiach in his full glory is a zechus one can merit through singing Shira with joy.

Thus, we see the far-reaching effects singing Shira can have. It is as though we are being מְמַלְיָהּ, we are making His Throne known throughout the world. And as the Trisker Maggid says, one can merit many blessings and הַשְׂפָעוֹת, like a king who gives a לְמִדְיָנָה on the day of his coronation. Furthermore, one can merit כְּפָרַת עֲוֹנוֹת, and also finally be zoche to greet Moshiach and witness his full glory at the final redemption. He will also merit to say this Shira both in Olam Haba and when Moshiach comes. However, these far-reaching effects can only be actualized if one says Shira in the correct way, with a

heart filled with joy and genuine gratefulness for the miracles we experienced.

Singing Our Personal Shira

One can access these blessings, not only through reciting the שִׁירָה הַיָּמִי, but also through saying our own personal Shira for any miracle we experienced. We can thank and praise Hashem, even in our own language, for any individual nissim that we were blessed with. And through thanking Hashem with unbridled joy, we can create a pipeline for more blessings to flow towards us. As it says in the Midrash mentioned earlier וְאָמַר שִׁירָה לוֹ גַם וְאָמַר שִׁירָה, if a person was granted a personal miracle, and he says Shira, then he can merit forgiveness for his sins and be created anew. This indicates that all types of Shira can bring great blessings to the one who recites it.

Therefore, we thank Hashem for the ability to thank. Chazal established מוֹדִים אֲנַחְנוּ לָךְ עַל שְׁאָנוּ מוֹדִים מוֹדִים דְּרַבְרָבָן, in which we say מוֹדִים לָךְ. We thank Hashem for the gift of allowing us to thank Him. And especially after we see the many blessings that we merit through saying Shira, and due to the great effect it has on us, we become even more grateful for the ability to praise and thank Him. We thank Hashem for granting us mere mortals the ability to thank and praise the מֶלֶךְ מְלֶכֶי הַמְּלָכִים the King of all kings. And then, for gifting us with even more blessings as a result of praising Him, and thus we can continue to sing Shira for eternity!

When the Gemara (סוטה דף מ.) says that we should say מוֹדִים דְּרַבְרָבָן during our tefillah, Rashi says שְׁנַתָּה בְּלִבְנוּ לְהִיּוֹת דְּבוּקִים בָּךְ וּמוֹדִים לָךְ, we are thanking Hashem for the will He put into our hearts, to attach ourselves to Him and to thank Him. In Yerushalmi, it says that there is an opinion that we should say עַל שְׁאָנוּ חַיִּיבִים לְהוֹדוֹת לָךְ we thank Hashem for having obligated us to thank Him. For by fulfilling this obligation, we can then bring untold blessings upon ourselves!

May we all merit the greatest blessing, of finally greeting מְשִׁיחַ in his full glory, when Klal Yisroel will merit to again sing this Shira that was sung חַג הַתְּקֵדָה upon the threshold of our first redemption from Mitzrayim. אָז יִשָּׂיר מֹשֶׁה וּבְנָיו.

גוט שבת



CORRECTION:

In last week's issue it was stated that the parshah of וְהִיָּה is written in the Torah before the possuk of Shema. We were made aware by one of our readers, that this is incorrect. Shema is actually in פרשת וְהִיָּה, while וְהִיָּה is in פרשת עֲקֵב. Please note that this error was due to a misunderstanding (by the writer) of the Mishnah in Berachos (ג). The Mishnah there asks why is the parshah of Shema before the parshah of וְהִיָּה? So that one should accept upon himself first, and thereafter he should accept עול המצוות. The wording of the Mishnah suggests that ideally וְהִיָּה should have come first, but because it discusses עול מצוות it actually comes after the parshah of Shema in the recitation of Shema. In fact, Tosafos there (יד:) addresses this difficulty, and explains that without this reasoning of Chazal, we would actually recite וְהִיָּה before Shema.

We would like to thank the reader who brought this important error to our attention.

